

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MANAGU 01640 112250Z
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 INR-07 SP-02 DHA-02 H-01
PM-04 L-03 SSO-00 INRE-00 /045 W
-----112332Z 028554 /75
O 112227Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2847

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 1640

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, SHUM, EAID, NU
SUBJECT: LONG COMMITTEE HEARINGS ON NICARAGUA

REF: (A) STATE 76270; (B) MANAGUA 1605

1. THE SUBSTANCE OF YOUR COMMENTS IN PARAS THREE THROUGH FIVE OF REFTTEL A WAS CONVEYED TO PRESIDENT SOMOZA DURING OUR MEETING IN HIS OFFICE AT NOON TODAY (APRIL 11). WE FIRMLY EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF SHOWING PROGRESS ON HUMAN RIGHTS PRIOR TO NEXT LONG COMMITTEE HEARING ON NICARAGUA SCHEDULED FOR APRIL 21. WE MENTIONED LIFTING STATE OF SIEGE AND TIGHTER INSTRUCTIONS RE CONDUCT OF NATIONAL GUARD AS EXAMPLES OF FORWARD STEPS THAT WOULD BE HELPFUL IN DEPARTMENT'S EFFORT TO PRESERVE SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

2. THE PRESIDENT REPEATED GON POSITION THAT LIFTING OF STATE OF SIEGE WOULD OCCUR AFTER PRISONERS COMPLETED THE PROCESS OF APPEALS AS REQUIRED BY MILITARY LAW, AND THAT HE COULD NOT INTERFERE WITH THIS PROCESS. HE ADDED POINTEDLY THAT HE WOULD NOT, IN ANY EVENT, LIFT THE STATE OF SIEGE NOW BECAUSE IT WOULD APPEAR THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WAS RESPONDING TO CONGRESSIONAL PRESSURE. HE SAID THE PRESIDENT KENNEDY HAD TAUGHT HIM QUOTE NEVER TO NEGOTIATE UNDER PRESSURE UNQUOTE. SOMOZA ALSO STATED THAT HE HAD GIVEN INSTRUCTIONS THREE TIMES OVER PAST SIX MONTHS TO NATIONAL GUARD COMMANDERS TO ACT
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WITH CARE AND RESTRAINT IN COUNTER-INSURGENCY OPERATIONS.

3. SOMOZA ASKED ME TO TELL YOU THAT YOUR STATEMENT ON HUMAN RIGHTS BEFORE CONGRESS LAST WEEK WAS REASONED AND BALANCED. BUT HE INDICATED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD BE COMPELLED TO TAKE DEFENSIVE ACTION AGAINST THE UNITED STATES, MUCH AGAINST HIS INCLINATION OR DESIRE, IF NICARAGUA WAS SUBJECT OF UNFAVORABLE CONGRESSIONAL ACTION.

HE WANTED ADMINISTRATION TO KNOW THAT IT WAS ITS OWN POLICIES THAT FORCED HIM TO RESPOND ON THE VARIOUS LEVELS AVAILABLE TO HIM. HE MENTIONED TRADE AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS IN THIS CONNECTION.

4. THE MESSAGE CONVEYED BY SOMOZA IS THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WILL NOT RESPOND FAVORABLY TO PUBLIC PRESSURE FROM CONGRESS OR ADMINISTRATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS, THAT U.S. ASSISTANCE IS NOT INDISPENSABLE OR ESSENTIAL TO SURVIVAL, AND THAT HE INTENDED TO REACT STRONGLY IN EVENT CONGRESS CUT OFF U.S. ECONOMIC OR SECURITY ASSISTANCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS GROUNDS. HE RESPECTED THE SINCERITY OF ADMINISTRATION VIEWS ON HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN NICARAGUA BUT DISAGREES STRONGLY THAT HUMAN RIGHTS ARE SERIOUSLY VIOLATED. HE BELIEVES HIS GOVERNMENT'S RECORD ON THIS ISSUE IS BETTER THAN MANY COUNTRIES IN HEMISPHERE NOT SUBJECT TO UNFAVORABLE CONGRESSIONAL OR ADMINISTRATION ACTION.
THEBERGE

NOTE BY OCT: DESSIMINATION COORDINATED WITH S/SO PER MR. GAMBLE.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: HUMAN RIGHTS, PROGRESS REPORTS, US CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 11-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977MANAGU01640
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770125-0982
Format: TEL
From: MANAGUA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770470/aaaaciks.tel
Line Count: 80
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: b6c52fa7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 STATE 76270, 77 MANAGUA 1605
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01-Apr-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2845530
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LONG COMMITTEE HEARINGS ON NICARAGUA
TAGS: PFOR, SHUM, EAID, NU
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/b6c52fa7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009